

higher grade or level while continuously employed (including such a movement in conjunction with a transfer).

Rate of basic pay means the rate of pay fixed by law or administrative action for the position held by an employee before any deductions and exclusive of additional pay of any kind. For an employee covered by the General Schedule, that *rate of basic pay* is the GS rate or, if applicable, an LEO special base rate.

Scheduled tour of duty means any work schedule established for an employee in accordance with the regular procedures for the establishment of workweeks in § 610.111 of this chapter. For a full-time employee this includes the basic 40-hour workweek. For a part-time employee this is any regularly scheduled work of less than 40-hours during the administrative workweek.

Temporary promotion means a time-limited promotion with a not-to-exceed date or a specified term.

Waiting period means the minimum time requirement of creditable service to become eligible for consideration for a within-grade increase.

Within-grade increase is synonymous with the term “step increase” used in 5 U.S.C. 5335 and means—* *

(1) A periodic increase in an employee's rate of basic pay from one step of the grade of his or her position to the next higher step of that grade in accordance with section 5335 of title 5, United States Code, and this subpart; or

(2) For a GM employee whose rate does not equal a regular GS step rate (*i.e.*, an off-step rate), a periodic increase in an employee's rate of basic pay from the employee's current rate to the next higher rate within the grade (as defined in this section) consistent with section 4 of Public Law 103-89.

[46 FR 2319, Jan. 9, 1981, as amended at 46 FR 41019, Aug. 14, 1981; 48 FR 49486, Oct. 25, 1983; 51 FR 8420, Mar. 11, 1986; 58 FR 65536, Dec. 15, 1993; 59 FR 40793, Aug. 10, 1994; 60 FR 33098, June 27, 1995; 60 FR 43947, Aug. 23, 1995; 70 FR 31301, May 31, 2005]

§ 531.404 Earning within-grade increase.

An employee paid at less than the maximum rate of the grade of his or her position shall earn advancement in pay to the next higher step of the grade or the next higher rate within the grade (as defined in § 531.403) upon meeting the following three requirements established by law:

(a) The employee's performance must be at an acceptable level of competence, as defined in this subpart. To be determined at an acceptable level of competence, the employee's most recent rating of record (as defined in § 430.203 of this chapter) shall be at least Level 3 (“Fully Successful” or equivalent).

(1) When a within-grade increase decision is not consistent with the employee's most recent rating of record a more current rating of record must be prepared.

(2) The rating of record used as the basis for an acceptable level of competence determination for a within-grade increase must have been assigned no earlier than the most recently completed appraisal period.

(b) The employee must have completed the required waiting period for advancement to the next higher step of the grade of his or her position.

(c) The employee must not have received an equivalent increase during the waiting period.

[51 FR 8420, Mar. 11, 1986, as amended at 58 FR 65536, Dec. 15, 1993; 60 FR 43948, Aug. 23, 1995]

§ 531.405 Waiting periods for within-grade increase.

(a) *Length of waiting period.* (1) For an employee with a scheduled tour of duty, the waiting periods for advancement to the next higher step in all General Schedule grades (or the next higher rate within the grade, as defined in § 531.403) are:

(i) Rate of basic pay less than the rate of basic pay at step 4–52 calendar weeks of creditable service;

(ii) Rate of basic pay equal to or greater than the rate of basic pay at step 4 and less than the rate of basic pay at step 7–104 calendar weeks of creditable service; and